



SPRING 2003



U.S. Congressman

**Lincoln Diaz-Balart**

***21st District, Florida***

LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART  
21ST DISTRICT, FLORIDA

COMMITTEE ON  
RULES

VICE CHAIRMAN,  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON  
LEGISLATIVE AND BUDGET PROCESS

SELECT COMMITTEE ON  
HOMELAND SECURITY

COMMITTEE ON  
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS  
(SENIORITY RETAINED)

ASSISTANT MAJORITY WHIP



**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
Washington, DC 20515-0921

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Dear Friends:

As the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress begins, I thought it was important to share with you some of the issues that we have worked on and the issues that we will be addressing. Since September 11, 2001, we have been working to rebuild our nation and our sense of security. It was my privilege to bring legislation to the House floor to create the Department of Homeland Security. The security and safety of the American people is the primary function of our admirable Armed Forces, of the Administration and of the United States Congress. As I write these lines, the U.S. Armed Forces are poised to disarm the dictatorship in Iraq so that its weapons of mass destruction no longer threaten the world. In the process of disarming Saddam Hussein's regime our Armed Forces will liberate the people of Iraq. Our Armed Forces deserve the full support of Congress and the American people. My prayers are with our men and women in uniform.

The education of our children and the economy continue to be on the top of my list of priorities. I am happy to report that we have made excellent progress toward achieving many of our goals. As you know, Congress passed H.R. 1, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, to ensure that a quality education for all will always be a priority. But we must do more. The House and Senate will continue to work together and we will remain focused on returning power back to parents, teachers and local school boards.

In order to boost the economy we must reduce taxes on American families and hold government more accountable for its spending. I believe that with increased spending by the American people and actions by Congress this year to reduce the financial burden of families across the nation, our economy will soon regain its full strength and vitality.

As you know, a gap in our provision of health care for this nation's elderly population is the absence of a prescription drug benefit. The plan we passed in the U.S. House of Representatives included common sense principles: we need to lower costs now; we need to provide guaranteed coverage for all seniors; and the plan needs to be permanent. The health of our seniors must always remain a top priority.

As in previous Congresses, I will continue to make local issues that affect our community a priority. As a Member of the House Committee on Rules, I work intensely to ensure that all debate on legislation presented before the House is fair and I remain committed to ensuring that the residents of Florida's 21<sup>st</sup> district are well represented in Congress.

I would also like to inform you that my office staff continues its Constituent Outreach Program to help with any problems you may have with federal agencies, such as Social Security, Immigration and Veterans Affairs, among others. To better serve you, two new days and locations have been added to the program (please see calendar).

In this newsletter I share with you information concerning education reform, homeland security, the economy, federal funding for flooding mitigation in our community, and other issues. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I may be of assistance or if there is any matter that you would like to bring to my attention. It is an honor to represent the people of the 21<sup>st</sup> district of Florida and I look forward to hearing from you.

Cordially,

  
Lincoln Diaz-Balart



## Flooding

Over the past several years, we have often seen flooding in our community, especially when the two storms hit. Hurricane Irene of October 1999 and the "No Name Storm" of October 2000. Both placed a heavy burden on our current canals and drainage systems. I have been working ceaselessly to find solutions to the economically and environmentally difficult problem of flooding in our communities.

Following the "No Name Storm", I worked intensely with colleagues in Congress to acquire funding to alleviate the flooding problem. To that end, Miami-Dade County is receiving almost \$800 million through FEMA's Disaster Mitigation Program. With funding in hand, the county worked closely with the State of Florida Department of Community Affairs and the South Florida Water Management District, to formulate a plan to reduce the amount of storm water damage to the area. The renovation and construction of drainage systems, new roads, and the dredging of over 200 miles of canals will yield a far superior storm water system while protecting the environmental and economic health of South Florida.

The following projects have been approved:

Road Restoration	\$124.7 million
Drainage Replacement	\$345.9 million
Drainage System Cleaning	\$17.5 million
Canal Dredging	\$234.9 million
Major Neighborhood Drainage	\$18.4 million
Sidewalk Restoration	\$150,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$741.55 million</b>

As we move forward, I will continue to monitor the progress of the flooding protection, and coordinate with Miami-Dade County to ensure that the necessary resources are available to complete the project so that residents never again face hardships similar to the flooding of Irene and the "No Name Storm". We must work as a community to ensure that our homes, streets, and sidewalks are safe from dangerous flood water.

While a strong plan is in place, rest assured that I will continue to work for continued funding for renovation to the infrastructure of the South Florida community. My goal is a strong water infrastructure for our community in the decades ahead.

## Constituent Outreach Program

I am pleased to announce the availability of my Constituent Outreach Program. This program serves to assist you with any problems you may have with federal agencies, such as Social Security, Immigration and Veterans Affairs, among others. Please note there are several changes to the schedule:

The first Wednesday of every month:

3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
Southwest Regional Library in Broward County  
16835 Sheridan Street  
Pembroke Pines

The second Wednesday of every month:

3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
Sweetwater City Hall  
500 S.W. 109th Avenue

The third Wednesday of every month:

2:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
Miami Springs City Hall  
201 Westward Drive

The fourth Wednesday of every month:

2:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
Miami Lakes Town Hall  
6853 Main Street

## Homeland Department & Security

Since September 11, 2001, we have been working to rebuild our nation, not only our buildings, but also our sense of security. It was my privilege to bring legislation to the House floor to create the Department of Homeland Security.

My position on the House Rules Committee allows me to have direct impact on all legislation that affects the American people, including homeland security. Bills from every committee come before the Rules Committee where we set the debate parameters and decide what amendments may be considered. This affords me a unique opportunity to shape legislation and ensure the best interests of Miami-Dade and Broward Counties are kept in mind.

The security of the American people is the primary function of the Government of the United States. The creation of this new Department to coordinate all security activities on behalf of the American people is an important first step, and will serve as the foundation of our continuing efforts of all we must do to protect our citizens.

The legislation, which I brought to the floor as a Member of the Rules Committee on November 13, 2002, created a new Federal Department, bringing together for the first time entities that were designed to protect the homeland of the United States. This new Department will ensure coordination among all of the agencies under its charge, as well as any Department that retains functions that could affect homeland security.

The Department of Homeland Security will help to protect our borders by overseeing the Coast Guard, Customs Service, and the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). Importantly, INS functions within the Department will now be divided up between border security, and immigration and visa services.

This historic legislation intensifies our effort to ensure that our Nation's first responders have the resources that they need to address all threats. This includes coordination with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Secret Service, and many other agencies, as well as the private sector. Additionally, this legislation promotes and expands upon our efforts in research, development, and technology in homeland security.

We must remember that the establishment of the Department of Homeland Security does not signal the end of our efforts. I will continue to work tirelessly to ensure the new Department effectively integrates its agencies and work to ensure that our state and local officials have the resources necessary to protect our citizens and infrastructure in South Florida.

It is an unfortunate reality that we may very well face future attacks within our borders or abroad. With the creation of this new Department, the American people can rest assured that the Federal Government is doing everything possible to thwart future terrorist attacks.

## Tax Help

With the 2002 Tax Filing Season upon us, I have included three numbers that may be helpful before April 15<sup>th</sup>.

**Internal Revenue Service Tax Advice Line:**  
1-800-829-1040 (Toll Free and available in Espanol)

**National Taxpayer Advocate Service:**  
1-877-777-4778 (Toll Free and available in Espanol)

**Internal Revenue Service Local Miami Office:**  
305-982-5077



# Bringing Federal Dollars Home

I continue to work on behalf of my constituents to improve our South Florida Community. Below is a partial list of projects for which I helped obtain funding in the fiscal year 2003 Consolidated Appropriations Resolution.

## Helping Our Colleges and Universities:

- \$1 million for the Barry University Minority Science Center
- \$700,000 for the Barry University Community Health and Minority Medicine
- \$7 million for the Florida International University Hemispheric Center for Environmental Technology
- \$405,000 for the Florida International University Law School

## Fighting Gridlock in Our Streets and Roads:

- \$3 million for Miami-Dade County Bus Procurement
- \$5,384,000 for the Palmetto Extension of the Metrorail

## Educating and Protecting Our Children:

- \$500,000 for the ARISE Foundation for educational programs for At-Risk Youth
- \$300,000 for Miami-Dade County to fund a Juvenile Assessment Center



*Congressman Diaz-Balart and local small business owners at a forum discussing how to help small businesses in South Florida.*

## Boosting Our Infrastructure:

- \$900,000 for the City of Sweetwater for Sanitary Sewage and Stormwater Collection

## Preventing Disease:

- \$1 million for local Mosquito Control Spraying

## Promoting Florida's Environment:

- \$3 million for the Florida National Scenic Trail

## HOW TO CONTACT CONGRESSMAN LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

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Also, visit my website  
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